

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 25, 2006**

Members Present: Morris, Ennis, Carroll, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Lardizzone, Magner, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Thompson, Wasson and Webb

Members Excused: Endres and Timberman

Staff Present: Davila

Guests: Richard Citron (VA Medical Center), Al Carter (SOS), Dean Reid (Veterans Home Administrator), Burton Barr (NARFE), Cullen Beaudin and David Ramsey (Elks Lodge 2540), and Ron Sarg (MOAA)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Chairman opened the meeting by reporting that an e-mail had been sent to New Hampshire Veterans Home requesting a visit to their facility as their entity is very much like our operation here.

Mr. Citron announced that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has approved their application to open a clinic in Dover. He stated that Dover is one of twenty-five community based clinics that have been approved. He continued to outline details about the clinic and answered questions. He announced that the Nursing Executive position will be filled by Mary Alice Johnson and the position of Associate Director of Operations will be filled by Steve Gallerizzo. There is a new Women Veterans Coordinator and her name is Martha Wallin, she is also the administrative officer for Chief of Surgery. He wanted to thank the DAV for the donation of the new van, which will be arriving soon.

Commissioner Kitson stated that the June Minutes should be amended to reflect that the VFW National Convention will start on August 26, 2006, and not June 26, 2006.

MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT JUNE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED, SECONDED BY WASSON, MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Newstadt pointed out that the columbarium niches are being used more often in recent years. A meeting has been scheduled for the Southern Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC) on August 24, 2006, at 6:00 PM, in Millsboro. He invited all Commissioners to attend.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

No report.

FINANCE AND LOGISTICS

No report.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Thompson reported that we are waiting for a decision from the Secretary of State on our discussions concerning the Veterans Home.

PERSONNEL

Commissioner Kitson brought up the issue that none of the current jobs being posted for the Veterans Home have a veteran's preference statement on them and he wanted to know the reason. Mr. Carter responded by saying that the State of

Delaware already provides veteran's preference on all merit jobs by having it listed on the application. If the Commission would like to have it on the posting, they could do that.

MOTION BY KITSON THAT ALL FUTURE JOB POSTINGS FOR THE VETERANS HOME HAVE VETERAN'S PREFERENCE LISTED ON THE JOB POSTING, SECONDED BY LANK, MOTION CARRIED.

MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS

No report.

HOME DEDICATION

Commissioner Harden reported that the Veterans Home Dedication & Cornerstone Ceremony pins have been received and will be placed on the programs. The sound system is being negotiated with an outfit in Wilmington. Both Northern and Southern Cemeteries have been notified that staff may be needed for the ceremony, as well as some of the Commission staff in this office. Golf carts will be used to transport guests to the tents. The Milford Community Band has been contacted. Letters have been sent to the VA and National Guard. No replies have been received to-date.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Mr. Reid recently attended the National State Veterans Home Association meeting and provided information he received. He reported that the Veterans Home construction is coming along good with no significant problems. He gave an update on the Administrator-in-Training (AIT) Program. He also reported that the Nursing Home Board for the State of Delaware met on July 11, 2006, and approved his package for him to go before the Nursing Home Administrators Board, which will be coming up in the next few weeks. He stated that he has been working on the donations list and discussed reasons why it has not yet been put out. He discussed the admissions package and Mr. Davila suggested they review the pre-application documents. Discussion followed.

MOTION BY LANK TO APPROVE THE USE OF THE VETERANS HOME PICTURE ON THE FRONT OF THE VETERANS HOME PRE-ADMISSION APPLICATION, SECONDED BY THOMPSON, MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE THAT THE VETERANS HOME PRE-ADMISSION APPLICATION BE RELEASED FOR PUBLICATION, SECONDED BY THOMPSON, MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion followed on how the pamphlet for the Veterans Home would be distributed and the admission requirements. There was also discussion about the in-house creation of the new Veterans Home website and updating the Commission website.

CHAIRMAN MORRIS CALLED FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 12:35 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDED AT 12:55 PM. CHAIRMAN MORRIS REPORTED THAT DURING THE EXECUTIVE SESSION THE COMMISSION DISCUSSED PERSONNEL ISSUES AND NO ACTION WAS REQUIRED.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Lardizzone (DAV) – Reported that he just returned from National Headquarters, Cold Springs, KY, for a Commanders and Adjutants Orientation. He also picked up a brand new 2006 Ford Freestar that will be assigned to Dover for transporting veterans to the VA Hospital. There will be a ceremony this Friday at the Wilmington VA Hospital to honor Mr. Citron for his involvement in the donation and purchase of the new vehicle. He invited everyone to join them.

Magner (AMVETS) – Reported that they had an Officer's Call this past Saturday at the DAFB Museum. AMVETS National Convention is scheduled for August 13-19, 2006, in Reno, NV.

Carroll (MOPH) – Announced that Purple Heart Day is Monday, August 7, 2006. A Ceremony is scheduled for 10:00 AM at the Memorial Bridge Park in New Castle. Everyone is invited to attend.

Kitson (VFW) – The VFW National Convention is scheduled for August 26–31, 2006. The Cooties National Convention will be September 1–3, 2006. He will be attending both conventions.

Harden (WAVES) – Reported that she will be meeting with Mr. Citron about planning a reception for the new Women Veterans Coordinator at the VA Hospital. She also attended the ceremony for the Purple Heart Stamp, which went very well.

Wasson (DELVETS) – Reported that they opened their pool on the first Saturday in July; they had a picnic and a nice service honoring the families of those who are in Iraq.

Newstadt (JWV) – Announced that JWV will be having their annual picnic at Talley Park on Faulk Rd, August 13, 2006. Everyone is invited.

Morris (American Legion) – Reported that they finished up their convention for the year. Dick Drummond, the American Legion Chaplain, has resigned due to medical problems.

Commissioner Carroll reported that the total in the Veterans Home Fund is currently \$65,323; this was after \$110,000 was transferred over to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The total for the Friends of the Veterans Home, which is being developed through the Steering Committee, is \$450,647. Mr. Davila clarified that the \$110,000 that had been transferred to OMB was matched 2:1 by the VA.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Davila announced that they have raised about \$6,000 toward the irrigation system at the Southern Cemetery and are looking to probably raise another \$15,000 to match existing funds. Commissioner Newstadt inquired as to the progress of the Kiosk system. Mr. Davila informed him that the Northern Cemetery has a meeting scheduled for August 8, 2006, for what is called a recap of the scope of work for the enhancements to that Cemetery. Verizon have already put down the high speed cable for both Cemeteries and they are in the process of training staff on the Funeral Director Internet Scheduling (FDIS) program. He stated that his office is in the process of having all DD 214s transferred to a high speed data imaging system and once it is online, that system will also be available to a select number of individuals at the Cemeteries.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairman Morris requested an update on the “Voices of World War II” program that the Lt Governor was working on. Mr. Davila indicated that he will follow-up on the project and provide an update.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Carroll announced that the next Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 2, 2006, 2:00 PM, at the Commission office.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: **AUGUST 29, 2006 (11:00 AM)**

LOCATION: **Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED

*Note: August meeting date changed to 5th Tuesday in order to accommodate New Hampshire Veterans Home availability for board meeting